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VINESH REACHES GONDA, WFI REFUSES TO LET HER TAKE PART

Despite being cleared by International Testing Agency, Vinesh Phogat not allowed to complete verification for Sr Open rankings meet in Gonda

'WFI CHIEF WANTS ME TO QUIT WRESTLING'

Vinesh presented her arguments before WFI president Sanjay Kumar Singh but all those fell on deaf ears. The 31-year-old grappler alleged conspiracy being hatched against her by former WFI chief Brij Bhushan. Earlier, the two-time Worlds medallist had expressed apprehension over participating at this venue, which is considered a stronghold of Brij Bhushan | P15

WRITTEN EXPLANATION NEEDED: WFI

- Reacting to Vinesh's accusations, Sanjay Singh said the wrestler has to submit a complete explanation and it would be submitted to the WFI's disciplinary committee, which eventually will take a call
- WFI highlighted the secure environment provided to Vinesh during her visit from her arrival in Gonda to her departure from the venue

3

NUMBER OF TIMES VINESH PHOGAT HAS TAKEN PART IN THE OLYMPICS

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

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SC restores Congress leader Rajegowda as Sringeri MLA

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY
@ New Delhi

T D Rajegowda

D N Jeevaraj

IN a significant order, the Supreme Court on Monday restored, as an interim measure, Congress leader T D Rajegowda as MLA of Sringeri Assembly constituency, after stating that "democracy can't be hijacked like this".

A two-judge bench, headed by Justice Sanjay Kumar and comprising Justice K Vinod Chandran, passed the order for status quo in the matter, which resulted in the ouster of Rajegowda as MLA. His opponent, BJP leader D N Jeevaraj, was declared winner of Sringeri Assembly constituency after a recount. The bench directed for keeping in abeyance all steps taken pursuant to the Karnataka High Court's order of April 6 that ordered the recount.

"Rajegowda will continue as MLA for now," the apex court said and also directed that steps be taken to restore him as MLA.

It also issued notice to the respondents -- the Karnataka government, Election Commission and others -- while hearing the appeal of Rajegowda, saying "democracy can't be hijacked like this."

During the hearing, a battery of senior advocates Kapil Sibal, Mukul Rohatgi and Devadatt Kamat, representing Rajegowda, questioned the validity of the high court's order.

The matter pertains to the 2023 Karnataka Assembly elections, in which Rajegowda had been declared winner from Sringeri constituency, by a slender margin of 201 votes. P4

SOMNATH ANNIV

Prime Minister Narendra Modi offers prayers at Somnath Temple in Veraval in Gujarat as part of the Somnath Amrut Mahotsav, marking 75 years of the inauguration of the restored temple dedicated to Lord Shiva | PTI

Victory margin vs SIR appeals: File fresh plea, SC tells Didi

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY
@ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Monday said former chief minister Mamata Banerjee and others can file fresh applications regarding their claim that the victory margins in 31 constituencies in the recent assembly polls in West Bengal were less than the number of voters challenging their deletion from the electoral rolls — during the special intensive revision (SIR) — before appellate tribunals.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi took note of the submissions after senior advocate and TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee referred to an earlier observation of Justice Bagchi that the court can look into the grievances if victory margins are less than the number of names deleted during the SIR.

Claiming that SIR impacted the Bengal poll coutcome, Banerjee submitted that in one constituency, his party candidate lost by 862 votes while more than 5,000 names were removed from the rolls. He added that the vote gap between the TMC and the BJP was 32 lakh while 35 lakh appeals were pending before appellate tribunals.

The Election Commission opposed Banerjee's submission, saying that the only remedy was an election petition. It said it can be held accountable for issues related to the SIR only. "The law is clear ... every issue arising out of SIR could not be separately litigated," the poll panel further argued.

The bench said the mechanism for adjudication of these appeals could be improved.

State govt hikes DA by 1.5%

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

THE state government has hiked the Dearness Allowance of its employees from 14.25% to 15.75% of their basic pay with effect from January 1, 2026. The Finance Department issued an order in this regard on Monday.

The DA hike is applicable for all government employees, including those serving in boards and corporations, pensioners and family pensioners. It is also applicable for pensioners and family pension beneficiaries of aided educational institutions and those under the pay rolls of University Grants Commission, AICTE and ICAR.

A separate order will issued for those under the payrolls of UGC, AICTE and ICAR and judicial officials under the National Judicial Pay Commission. The order stated that the DA hike will be disbursed with the May salary.

Karnataka State Government Employee Association president CS Shadakshari said the DA hike will help 5.25 lakh government employees, three lakh employees of various boards and corporations and 4.5 lakh pensioners.

EXPRESS READ

SEC moves SC, wants GBA polls deferred

Bengaluru: With its staffers engaged in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and Census work, the State Election Commission (SEC) on Monday filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court, seeking more time to hold polls to the five corporations under Greater Bengaluru Authority | P2

Two siblings die as fire guts shed in Kothanur

Bengaluru: Two siblings, aged five and three, died when fire broke out in their temporary shed near K Narayanapura in Kothanur police station limits in Bengaluru on Monday afternoon. Their parents are labourers and hail from Raichur | P3

Austerity pitch spooks markets, hits sentiments

Sensex down 1.7%, rupee falls to 95.31, govt reviewing pricing of petroleum products

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi's call for austerity in view of the Iran war triggered sharp reactions across markets and sectors on Monday, with investors interpreting the remarks as a signal of an imminent crisis.

Equity markets tumbled over 1.5%, while the rupee—which depreciated 11.5% in the past year— plunged 82 paise to settle at a record closing low of 95.31 against the US dollar. Taking cues from the PM's warning on economic disruptions, the BSE Sensex fell 1,312.91 points, or 1.7%, to close at 76,015.28, while the NSE Nifty50 declined 360.30 points, or 1.49%, to settle at 23,815.85.

During a speech in Hyderabad on Sunday, Modi called for collective participation to help India navigate global economic disruptions, supply chain challenges, and rising prices. He urged people to avoid buying gold and cut down on foreign travel, and asked companies to revive work-from-home arrangements similar to those adopted during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The PM's call for reducing petrol and diesel consumption also fuelled speculation that a retail fuel price hike was imminent.

On Monday, the petroleum ministry said oil marketing companies are likely to face under-recoveries of ₹2 lakh crore in the first quarter of FY27. The ministry added the government is reviewing fuel pricing.

Petroleum products and gold imports remain major burdens on India's external account. In FY26, India imported petroleum products worth $172 billion while gold imports surged 24% to $72 billion. India's foreign exchange reserves stood at $690 billion in the week ending May 1, down from a peak of $728 billion in the week ended Feb 27.

The PM's appeal for restraint on gold purchases has brought renewed attention to the free trade pact with the UAE, following which gold imports jumped from $3 billion in 2022 to $16.5 billion in 2025.

Remote and hybrid work on: Nasscom

On PM's call for work from home arrangements, Nasscom said most companies have already optimised energy consumption and enabled remote and hybrid work arrangements wherever operationally appropriate to reduce energy usage and commuting

Concerned about crisis: India Inc

India Inc has expressed concern over the economic challenges owing to Gulf crisis. Sunil Mittal, chairman, Bharti Enterprises, said the crisis has placed pressure on global economies, including India

Sonia, Priyanka step in to break the impasse over Kerala CM candidate

K S SREEJITH @ T'Puram

THE suspense over who will be the next Kerala chief minister deepened on Monday, a week after the election results gave a thumping majority to the Congress-led UDF, as the party's central leadership summoned senior leaders from the state for another round of talks.

The move comes after senior leader Sonia Gandhi and Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra favoured detailed discussions with former KPCC presidents to resolve the deadlock.

Apart from Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) chief Sunny Joseph and working presidents A P Anil Kumar, P C Vishnunadh and Shafi Parambil, former KPCC presidents V M Sudheeran, K Muraleedharan, K Sudhakaran, and M M Hassan are expected to reach Delhi by Tuesday.

Decision today?

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge, who is on a visit to his home state Karnataka, will reach Delhi on Tuesday, earlier than his scheduled return on Wednesday. This, Congress sources said, indicates an announcement is likely on Tuesday

Mullappally Ramachandran expressed his inability to travel at short notice after which senior leader Rahul Gandhi spoke to him on the phone.

According to party sources, the high command is likely to meet the Kerala leaders individually to take their inputs. The three contenders for the CM's post—K C Venugopal, Ramesh Chennithala, and V D Satheesan—have pinned their hopes on these meetings.

Although the senior leaders had met the two central observers during their visit to Kerala, the latest decision is in view of the continuing stalemate over CM selection.

However, there are indications that the latest round of talks is to ward off criticism that all stakeholders were not taken into confidence.

Sources said both Rahul and party president Mallikarjun Kharge would meet the leaders and seek their opinion on the choice of the new CM and the overall political atmosphere.

Thereafter, the high command may summon the three CM contenders and inform them of the final decision.

New Bengal govt clears land transfer for border fencing

SUBHENDU MAITI @ Kolkata

THE new BJP government in West Bengal, in its first cabinet meeting, approved the long-delayed transfer of land to the BSF for fencing along the border with Bangladesh.

"The transfer process of land for border fencing will start within 45 days of the formation of our government in the state, and it was our commitment. The state chief secretary and land and land reform department secretary will work together to hand over land to the BSF," Chief Minister Suvendhu Adhikari said.

The transfer process will begin immediately, and the cabinet has empowered the chief secretary and the secretary of the state's land and land revenue department to complete the process within the next 45 days

Suvendhu Adhikari, CM

He said that as per the knowledge he acquired during his previous tenure as the Leader of Opposition, some 90 per cent of the land required to complete the border fencing exercise was already under state acquisition. "I will have to go through the papers to figure out the exact status of the land required, and for which I will need some more time," he said.

While campaigning for the recently-held assembly elections in the state, top BJP leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah, had accused the previous Trinamool Congress government of compromising the country's security by delaying the land transfer to the BSF.

In another major decision, the government approved rolling out the Centre's health insurance scheme Ayushman Bharat in the state. He assured that no existing social security schemes, including, Swasthya Sathi, a health scheme launched by Mamata Banerjee, will be withdrawn.

NIA joins probe into gelatin stick recovery along PM route in B'luru

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE National Investigation Agency (NIA) and other central agencies have joined the investigation into the recovery of gelatin sticks along a route used by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's convoy on Kanakapura Road, in Kaggalipura police station limits on Sunday morning. The agencies are also probing the hoax threat call received by police ahead of the PM's visit to the city.

PM Modi had visited HAL in Bengaluru and the Art of Living centre in Bengaluru South district where he had attended the inauguration of the Dhyan Mandir on Sunday. Before his arrival at the AoL centre, a packet containing gelatin sticks was found by a police constable.

The discovery of explosives has raised serious questions about security arrangements ahead of a high-profile visit.

On Monday morning, an NIA team visited the spot and collected primary details from Bengaluru South police. It is also learnt that teams from the National Security Guard (NSG), Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), central intelligence agencies, state intelligence department and officials of the Internal Security Division (ISD) inspected the spot and are probing the matter.

Senior officials are reviewing possible security lapses, analysing CCTV footage and studying local intelligence inputs to determine how the package came to be placed along a route that had ostensibly been cleared ahead of Modi's visit.

Kaggalipura police registered an FIR under the Explosive Substances Act. P4

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